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Summary record of the 45th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 17 December 1998, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Abelian ..... (Armenia)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Mselle

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Organization of work

1. **Mr. Odaga-Jalomayo** (Uganda), speaking on a point of order, said that the Committee should concentrate on the one item still outstanding rather than take formal action on the items on which consensus already existed. Accordingly, the Committee should move to an informal meeting for that purpose.

2. **Mrs. Brennen-Haylock** (Bahamas) proposed that informal consultations should proceed in parallel with the formal meeting, since only a small number of representatives of groups would be involved in the consultations. Delegations not involved with the outstanding issue could proceed with the remainder of the Committee's work.

3. **Mr. Odaga-Jalomayo** (Uganda) said that it would expedite the Committee's work to resolve the outstanding issue so that decisions could then be taken on all items at one time.

4. **Ms. Powles** (New Zealand) said that her delegation was willing to proceed as previously agreed and to go on with other issues so as to allow the Committee's work to continue in the most constructive manner.

5. **Mr. Kabir** (Bangladesh) said that it would be difficult for the Committee to conduct a formal meeting and informal consultations at the same time.

6. **Mrs. Brennen-Haylock** (Bahamas) said that the Committee must make the best use of its time. The informal consultations would involve only a small number of people.

7. **Mr. Skjonsberg** (Norway) said that his delegation supported the representatives of the Bahamas and New Zealand.

8. **The Chairman** drew the Committee's attention to rule 116 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, which limited the number of speakers on a motion for adjournment of debate.

9. **Mr. Odaga-Jalomayo** (Uganda) said that delegations' views differed on how to spend the Committee's time usefully. Since consensus already existed on several items, it was more important to spend time on resolving the remaining outstanding issue rather than hearing explanations of position on matters on which there was already agreement. His delegation was surprised at the insistence on holding informal consultations at the same time as the formal meeting.

10. **Mr. Darwish** (Egypt) said that while his delegation was flexible, it felt that it would facilitate the issuance of documents for submission to the General Assembly if the Committee continued with its formal meeting.

11. **The Chairman** suggested that the Committee should take up the first six items listed in the *Journal* for that meeting and then meet informally.

12. **Mr. Odaga-Jalomayo** (Uganda) said that his delegation had no preference for one item over any other; it would simply expedite the Committee's work to resolve the outstanding issues relating to the budget outline and then adopt all the draft resolutions at one sitting.

13. **The Chairman** said that it was important to submit reports as quickly as possible to the General Assembly, which was to adjourn that day. He noted that earlier in the session the Committee had taken action on the scale of assessments as a separate item.

14. **Mr. Jaremczuk** (Poland) supported the Chairman's suggestion.

15. **Ms. Incera** (Costa Rica) supported the position taken by the representative of Uganda.

16. **Mr. Darwish** (Egypt) appealed to the delegation of Uganda to agree to the holding of informal consultations in parallel to facilitate the Committee's work.

17. **The Chairman** said that the Committee might need to vote on the matter, but that, in accordance with the rules of procedure, no further speakers could take the floor on the question.

18. **Mr. Adawa** (Kenya) said that refusal to allow further speakers would constitute a violation of the rules of procedure. In any event no one had requested a vote. His delegation supported the position taken by the representative of Uganda, particularly since informal consultations would take only a few minutes. The Chairman was seeking to impose views on the Committee which were not acceptable to many delegations.

19. **The Chairman** said that the Committee was bound by rule 116 of the rules of procedure.

20. **Ms. Buergo Rodríguez** said that the Committee had not actually begun consideration of any item at the meeting. In the interest of saving time, she supported the representatives of Uganda and Kenya.

21. **The Chairman** said that the Committee would suspend its formal meeting to determine how to proceed.

The meeting was suspended at 10.30 a.m. and resumed at 10.45 a.m.

22. **Mr. Thorne** (United Kingdom) proposed that the Committee should again suspend the formal meeting to allow for further informal consultations.

23. *It was so decided.*

The meeting was suspended at 10.55 a.m. and resumed at 12:10 p.m.

24. **Mrs. Brennen-Haylock** (Bahamas) reported that the atmosphere in the consultations regarding the budget outline had been productive, but that more time was needed to reach agreement.

25. **Mr. Yusuf** (United Republic of Tanzania) asked about the implications for the preparation of the programme budget if the Committee was unable to agree on a budget outline, and whether the Secretary-General could prepare a budget without a resolution from the Fifth Committee.

26. **Mr. Schlesinger** (Austria) recalled that, prior to the adoption of General Assembly resolution 41/213, programme budgets had been prepared without an outline, and that the adoption of that resolution had resolved a major crisis. Failure to agree on a budget outline would place the operations of the entire Organization at risk.

27. **Mr. Halbwachs** (Controller) said that, in the absence of a budget outline, the Secretary-General would be guided by financial regulation 3.4 and would submit his proposed programme budget. Without a budget outline, however, there would be no contingency fund and therefore nothing to draw down on for programme budget implications for the biennium 2000–2001.

28. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that, in the absence of a budget outline, the status of General Assembly resolution 41/213 would be in jeopardy. As the chief administrative officer of the Organization, the Secretary-General was required under financial regulation 3.4 to propose a budget to the General Assembly based on his own judgement of what would be required to implement the mandates of the General Assembly. In his view, it was not yet the appropriate time to contemplate the consequences of such a situation.

29. **The Chairman** said that further consultations would be held on the programme budget outline.

The meeting was suspended at 12.35 p.m.